

Arizona Veterans' Service Advisory Commission Meeting

Arizona State Veterans' Home Conference Room A-107

September 13, 2007

Minutes

Present:

Commissioner Chairman - Thomas B. Dingwall, III
Commissioner Vice-Chairman - Kenneth K. Yamanouchi
Commissioner - Gary W. Fredericks
Commissioner - Linda A. Fulkerson
Commissioner - Thomas A. Heaney
Commissioner - William L. Lunsford
Commissioner - Larry E. McKim
Commissioner - Phillip R. Quochytewa, Sr.

Absent:

Commissioner - Webb Ellis

ADVS:

Richard "Gregg" Maxon – Director
Mike Klier – Deputy Director
Angela Shinn - Asst. Deputy Director
Gabe Forsberg – Plans & Development Manager
Lee Borgen – Veterans Benefits Counselor
Mona Engler – ADVS

Attorney General's Office:

Jeff Dollins

Call to Order

Chairman Dingwall called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Chairman Dingwall

Introduction and Welcome to Invited Guests

Chairman Dingwall opened the meeting by mentioning an Executive Session will be placed on the agenda for next month to obtain legal advice from the Attorney General's Office (Jeff Dollins) on the Open Meeting Law. Chairman Dingwall welcomed guests Robert Bohach, Noel Benoit and ADVS employees. Chairman Dingwall also mentioned Gabe Forsberg had been promoted and would no longer be performing administrative functions for the commission. Chairman Dingwall praised Lee Borgen for the August 4, 2007 minutes.

Review and Approval of Minutes of August 4, 2007

Vice Chairman Yamanouchi motioned to approve the minutes of August 4, 2007 with one minor correction noted. Second by Commissioner Heaney. *Action: Motion to approve minutes of August 4, 2007 were unanimously approved, as amended.*

Communications/Correspondence

Mona Engler informed the commissioners seven pieces of correspondence had been mailed out under the signature of Vice-Chairman, Kenneth Yamanouchi. These were thank you letters to various dignitaries who had attended the August 4, 2007 Town Hall meeting.

Agency Announcements and Updates

Korean War Museum

Director Maxon reported an upcoming meeting with Rick Romley and other individuals heading up the Korean War Museum fundraising effort. The plans appear to be very similar to the World War II Museum. *A donation from the Veterans' Donation Fund to assist with this effort may be a possibility.*

Enduring Freedom Memorial

Director Maxon provided the plans for the commissioners to view. The original completion date was scheduled for 2006 with an unveiling scheduled for May 2007. There was a legal/technical question on the deadline to complete the work. ADVS requested assistance from the Attorney General's office (Jeff Dollins) for review and advice on the statutory requirements regarding the deadline. *Action: Jeff Dollins agreed to confirm in writing that the dedication ceremony of the memorial may proceed without penalty.*

The original Executive Order referred to the memorial as the Iraqi War Memorial and this evolved to be known as the Enduring Freedom Memorial. A proposed amendment has been drafted to clarify these issues and will be forwarded to the Governor's office. The commission that oversees this will be referred to as the "Southwest Asia Conflict Memorial Commission." This is more descriptive and will not change or alter the name of the memorial.

The criteria for including a name on the memorial was developed after reviewing the criteria used for the Vietnam War Memorial. Future disputes about whether a name should be included on the Enduring Freedom Memorial may be appealed to the Arizona Veterans' Service Advisory Commission. The Memorial Commission will develop the protocol for filing an appeal.

Veteran Benefits Counselors

Director Maxon reported ADVS obtained the authority to hire additional VBC's. The hiring will be in increments of four to five at a time. ADVS has hired the first group. The plan is to place VBC's strategically across the state so that no veteran has to travel no more than one hour to meet with a VBC. The proposed locations for VBC placements are Show Low, Safford, Kingman, and Bullhead City.

Navajo Nation Veterans

Director Maxon informed the commission that he attended a Navajo Nation Summit in New Mexico recently and they are thinking of creating a Veterans' Affairs department within the Navajo Nation. ADVS is considering designating a VBC in Window Rock. This VBC could potentially also serve as a liaison between the Navajo Nation and ADVS.

Inter Tribal Veterans Association

The Inter Tribal Veterans Association (comprised of American Indian Veterans invited to participate from all Arizona tribes). The association met a few times and reportedly dissolved because of the cost of transportation to and from the meetings. Director Maxon requested the

group, as they reform, to propose a budget. ADVS may be able to utilize the Donation Fund to assist with travel costs.

Van Purchase

A modified van will be purchased to provide a mobile VBC office to. If the mobile office is successful in northern Arizona, ADVS may consider purchasing additional modified vans. Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has extensive experience with the mobile office concept and may be able to assist with developing a plan.

Veteran License Plate

Director Maxon reported sales are going well and encouraged commissioners to promote the purchase of veteran plates.

Solicitation of Funds in the Name of Veterans

Angela Shinn explained the Plans, Outreach and Committees (POC) scope. By statute, the Director of ADVS is authorized to approve the solicitation of funds in the names of veterans, however, no legal criteria exist to approve or disapprove.

General Questions:

- Chairman Dingwall asked about the Veterans' Outreach Program in Chandler scheduled for October.
- Mike Klier confirmed an outreach event would be held in Chandler and would not be hosted by ADVS.
- Future outreach events include ADVS as a participant, but not as a host. This is more economical for ADVS to participate rather than to host.
- Mike Klier reported that a second wave of VBC's will be hired by the end of the fourth quarter. He hopes to have 95% of VBC's hired by the fourth quarter.
- At the Prescott meeting, Vice-Chairman Yamanouchi was asked why donations could not be made by credit card. *Action: Director Maxon agreed to research the credit card option.*
- Vice-Chairman Yamanouchi asked why adult day health care was no longer available at the home?
- Director Maxon explained the cost to the home was \$500,000 to provide adult daycare to (5) persons and the program was simply not cost effective.

Region 1 Action Items on Agenda

Commissioner Fredericks congratulated Vice-Chairman Yamanouchi on conducting the meeting held on August 4, 2007. The following issues were raised:

- Commissioner Fredericks recommends the ADVS website accurately reflect the time, date and location of the AVSAC meetings. *Action: Mike Klier responded he would address these concerns.*
- Mayor Tony Gioia of Camp Verde would like to be placed on a list for any legislative information relevant to rural veterans. *Action: Mike Klier requested the Mayor's e-mail address in order to follow up on this item.*
- Mayor Tom Rankin of Florence requested assistance with support services in Pinal County for returning veterans and improving ability to transport veterans to and from VA facilities. *Action: Thomas Heaney requested to get involved with this issue since he resides in this region. Mike Klier agreed to meet with the Mayor of Florence explaining he is planning on giving a presentation to the Central Arizona College in the near future and will be in the area. He will contact the Mayor to discuss these issues.*

- Vice-Chairman Yamanouchi noted the question could have been answered by the VA, however, the VA was not present at the meeting.
- Vice-Chairman Yamanouchi attributed the large turn out at the Town Hall meeting to the personal telephone calls he and Commissioner Fredericks made. -However, he was very disappointed that there were no American Indian veteran representatives and was at a loss on how to get them to attend the meetings.

Commission Meeting Calendar

Chairman Dingwall announced the next AVSAC meeting will be held at the ASVH on October 11, 2007 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.

- Mike Klier asked Commissioner Heaney how he arrived at {3 million} for the Pearl Harbor Memorial Fund. Commissioner Heaney explained that a company had originally pledged a million towards the Pearl Harbor Memorial Fund, but has never paid this amount.
- Gabe Forsberg offered to arrange the ADVS guided tour for the commissioners. Vice Chairman Yamanouchi recommended an approximate time of two hours be set aside for the tour. The tour will arranged for the month of December when Commissioner Heaney plans on inviting the Fleet Reserve Commander to the meeting. *Action: Tour will be scheduled in the month of December by Gabe Forsberg.*

Chairman Dingwall set the AVSAC meeting calendar as follows:

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
November 13, 2007	Lake Havasu	10-12pm
December 13, 2007	ASVH – Phx	10-12pm
January 12, 2008	Sierra Vista AL Post #52	10-12pm
February 14, 2008	ASVH – Phx	10-12pm
March 8, 2008	Region 2 Area Springerville or Eager	10-12pm
April 10, 2008	ASVH – Phx	10-12pm

Veterans' Research Council – Report on Meeting

Commissioner Fulkerson provided copies of the Interim Report of Veterans' Research Council Memorandum for Governor Janet Napolitano-Commissioner Fulkerson explained this proposal was presented by the five sub-committees. The Veterans' Research Council will prioritize according to cost.

Camp Alpha proposal from the Homeless Veterans Subcommittee

Commissioner Fulkerson provided a hand-out and explained details of the collaboration of the Southwest Stand down and Homeless Veterans Sub-Committee to present Camp Alpha. The committee thought this would be a good program for the commission to present to the department for purposes of setting up a grant program with dedicated funds such as those from

the Indian Gaming Fund that are geared toward homeless veterans for other rural communities. She plans on providing a pamphlet of information at the next meeting.

Announcements from the Commission

- Commissioner Fredericks reported the commander of AMVets will be working to obtain a carillon tower at the federal cemetery. The cost is approximately \$72,000 dollars plus installation charges. The UAV (Unified Arizona Veterans) raised more than their targeted amount of \$18,000 dollars that— Director Maxon agreed to match. The tower will be dedicated on Memorial Day 2008 at Cave Creek.
- Commissioner McKim reported on the status of the Calvary Soldiers Re-Location Project. They have located 53 military grave sites and identified 33 by name and unit. The target date for re-internment is October 2008. The cemetery foundation is going to build an 1800-1860's cemetery within the cemetery. The VA has already agreed to provide headstones from that era. The Southern Arizona Association of Builders and Contractors will provide pro bono architectural services. Commissioner McKim will provide electronic copies of information on the program Representative Gabrielle Giffords is also very supportive of the project.
- Commissioner Heaney reported he had been asked by a veteran to request that the VA build a national cemetery in Tucson. The reason for this request is that seven family members are already interred in Sierra Vista and it is too far to travel. He recommended the commissioners discuss the endorsement on next month's agenda.
 - Commissioner Heaney provided notice of a veterans meeting at the Pima County North West Campus in Tucson.
- Commissioner Quochytewa reported a Native American Traveling Wall of Code Talkers is presently on display at the Hopi Healthcare Facility and extended an invitation for everyone to attend and view the wall.
- Chairman Dingwall thanked Jeffrey Dollins for attending the meeting and thanked him for providing advice to the commissioners at the next AVSAC meeting in October.

Public Comments

- Noel Benoit stated that he was part of a "history making" event to occur at the House of Representatives. The meeting of American Indian veterans and tribal leaders will be held at the Arizona State House. He plans to finalize the letter and forward Mike Klier.
- Robert Bohack stated he represented a number of veteran organizations. He mentioned the Code Talkers program started in WWI. he raised the issue of persons in violation of the law by placing veterans' seals directly on their license plates.
- Commissioner Fredericks recommended that Mr. Bohack raise this issue at the next UAV meeting.
- Robert Bohack will check with the MVD on the license plates and inform Gabe if the law has changed.

Adjournment

Commissioner Heaney motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Fulkerson seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 12: 10pm.